

Age UK West Sussex

Who are we - and what do we do?

Our vision

A world in which older people flourish

Our mission

To improve the lives of older people in West Sussex.

Organisation

We are a charity and a social enterprise driven by the needs and aspirations of people in later life.

The history of our organisation

Age Concern West Sussex was founded in 1957 by West Sussex County Council with staff seconded by the Council to manage its affairs. In 1972, the organisation changed its name from West Sussex Association of Elderly People to Age Concern West Sussex, and in 1980 the organisation first employed staff independently of the Council. In April 2010 we changed our name to Age UK West Sussex (AWS).

Over its long history, AWS has moved from a focus on 'welfare' to developing a role in the policy and planning of services for older people across the county. Our core staff have grown from several part-time volunteers to a large team of paid and volunteer staff.

AWS is an independent charity and a member of the Age England Association. We are a Brand partner with Age UK. AWS is financially supported by West Sussex County Council, NHS West Sussex, Arun, Crawley and Mid Sussex District Councils. Other funding is made up of project grants, donations and legacies and commission from the sale of our insurance products. We are developing cost effective paid for services too.

AWS is managed by a Board of Trustees; members are elected for three year terms. The Board meets every 2 months. Trustees delegate the day-to-day management of the organisation to the Chief Executive

Our services include:

Information and Advice Service

AWS has had an information and advice service for many years. The service handles more than 4,500 enquiries a year, and works to the AQS, a national quality assurance standard. Enquiries can be made by telephone, mail, email or by calling in to our office. We have a team of paid staff and volunteers who operate our county wide information and advice service, who are able to deal with in-depth enquiries as well as signposting to other agencies where appropriate, including other AWS services. Issues such as Debt, needing a care home and other housing queries are key issues.

Help at Home

This service operates countywide and it provides cleaning, shopping and other practical support to older people. The project is both a private and in some cases a subsidised service, funded by WSCC. The service matches home helps to older people. We monitor the quality of service and ensure the arrangements between the client and the home help are successful.

Home from Hospital

Age UK Horsham District, Age UK West Sussex and Guild Care are working in partnership to deliver a countywide 'Home from Hospital' service for people living within West Sussex. The service is aimed at vulnerable people who have no care or support at discharge from hospital. Each person has an individual support plan developed which helps them to settle back into independent living. There is no customer charge for this service as it is fully funded by WSCC.

Take Home and Settle and Relative Support Service

This is similar to the Home from Hospital Service but is run by staff based in A and E departments across West Sussex, taking people home and helping them settle back at home. During times when there are no clients to be taken home, our coordinators will visit the hospital wards to speak to patients and their relatives and we support them to make informed choices about their future housing or care needs. These projects are delivered in partnership with Guild Care and Age UK Horsham District.

Social Prescribing

The definition of Social Prescribing is a means of enabling GP's and other front line healthcare professionals to refer patients to a link worker to provide them with a non clinical social prescription to improve their health and wellbeing.

We are delivering 2 service one working in partnership with the Regis GP Health Group and the other with Horsham and Mid Sussex CCG. The purpose of the Link Worker is to support patients in identifying and navigating personalised innovative opportunities and solutions to support the self-management of their complex health and social care needs. Both services are supporting patients to self manage their issues, which can be financial, housing, isolation or accessing community support. This empowering of self management improves health and wellbeing and reduces dependency on primary health care.

Prevention Assessment Team

The Northern and Western Prevention Assessment Teams are a multi-disciplinary team offering a holistic approach to all clients, assessing their care, health and social needs, promoting independence, health and well-being, preventing avoidable health and social issues and supporting independent living. We provide the community support workers to the team.

Activity Centres

AWS runs 4 activity centres - The Laburnum Centre in Bognor, The Hayward's Heath Centre, The Cherry Tree Centre in Burgess Hill and the Crawley Centre. With support from volunteers, our aim is to continue to develop thriving community venues for older people. The activities within the centres are varied - service users can enjoy a range of activities including Line Dancing, Zumba Gold, Ballroom Dancing, Flower

Craft, Cinema Club, Digital Photography, exercise classes and computer classes. We also offer Chiropody and have therapy rooms at our centres. Some centres also offer hairdressing. The laburnum centre has a fully equipped gym. All centres provide good healthy food at reasonable prices. The centres aim to get involved in local community events and provide opportunities for young people to interact in a positive manner with people in later life.

Littlehampton Clubs

AWS has Littlehampton Clubs running from Wick Hall on a Monday afternoon and St. Catherine's on a Monday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings. We also offer activities at Westfield Court Lounge, East Preston & Kingston Village Hall and St. Mary's as well as at The Laurels. Snacks and beverages are available along with a variety of activities offered at each venue. These are wide ranging and include; Tai Chi, pilates, creative writing, Mindfulness, card & board games and numerous fitness groups for all.

Community Clubs

In Crawley and Adur we are funded by the local councils and the county council to provide clubs for older people in the community. We have 20 clubs operating in Tilgate, Three Bridges, Southgate and Bewbush. There are a growing number of clubs in Lancing, Shoreham, Sompting, Southwick and Fishergate. There are also roaming lunch clubs in the Crawley area. We also run community clubs at Leaholme in Chichester, partnership working with Places for People and WSCC.

Elderberry Clubs (Carers Service)

In Haywards Heath, Littlehampton and Burgess Hill we provide a Saturday respite service for carers of people with dementia. A valuable day where carers can bring their loved ones for a stimulating day but go off and do other things, a similar service for frail elderly people in Crawley on a Thursday.

Other Activities

In addition to providing services to people in later life AWS represents the interests of older people at statutory and public meetings to provide opportunities for two-way consultation. We provide support and advice to small groups providing services for older people and are involved in establishing a range of new services. Also, AWS, in partnership with others, is supporting older people to have a voice in their local area with the development of local older person's forums